

July 8, 2010

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
BUREAU OF HIGHWAY DESIGN**

CONFERENCE REPORT

PROJECT: 13408-B

Hampton Falls – Hampton

Replacement of the Taylor River Bridge on I-95 (Blue Star Turnpike)

DATE OF CONFERENCE: June 21, 2010

LOCATION OF CONFERENCE: Hampton Town Offices, 88 Winnacunnet Rd, Hampton NH

ATTENDED BY: Robert Landry – Project Manager
C.R. Willeke – Preliminary Design Engineer
Tony Puntin – The Louis Berger Group, Inc. (LBG)
Bernard Hay – The Louis Berger Group, Inc. (LBG)
Executive Councilor – Beverly A. Hollingworth
State Representative – Russell Bridle - Hampton
State Representative – Nancy Stiles - Hampton
Approximately 30 public attendees

SUBJECT: Public Informational Meeting to receive input on Preferred Alternative B – Bridge Replacement with Dam Replacement

NOTES ON CONFERENCE:

Bob Landry opened the meeting and asked for introductions of elected officials. Bob used a slide show presentation to describe the meeting agenda, project partners, goals of the meeting, project area, and the needs for the project which include flooding concerns along the Taylor River immediately upstream of the I-95 bridge, as well as the deteriorated conditions of the existing bridge, dam, and fish way.

Bob summarized the alternatives for the project which include:

Alternative A – No Action
Alternative B – Replace Bridge and Dam
Alternative C – Replace Bridge Only (Remove Existing Dam)

Bob Landry then turned the meeting over to Bernard Hay from LBG to describe the conclusions of an impact assessment completed as part of the Draft Feasibility Study. Bernard described the impacts each alternative would have on the following items:

- Flooding
- Sediment / Water Quality
- Fisheries
- Species of Concern
- Wetlands
- Recreational Values
- Wells / Fire Protection
- Cultural Resources

Bernard then turned the meeting over to Tony Puntin from LBG to discuss the results of the impact assessment on local property values and to summarize the conceptual cost estimates for alternatives B and C. Tony indicated that at this level of estimating, the costs for either alternative are essentially equal and are in the range of \$8.5 to \$9 million. Tony then turned the meeting back over to Bob Landry to announce the Department's preferred alternative.

Bob Landry indicated that the Department's preferred alternative is "Alternative B – Replace Bridge and Dam". Bob noted that the Department is currently working with the resource agencies involved with permitting this project and that a permit for dam replacement may be difficult to obtain.

Bernard Hay indicated that because the dissolved oxygen level in the pond is impaired, the resource agencies would want to see oxygen levels improved as part of this project. Bernard mentioned several ways to improve dissolved oxygen levels and overall water quality in the pond:

- Limit runoff to the pond from land uses involving farms and fertilizers,
- Harvest plants in the fall to reduce organic matter,
- Add mechanical devices to introduce oxygen (last resort - expensive), and
- Modulate the level of the dam during the year to introduce oxygen.

Bob Landry indicated that the most efficient and cost effective methods for improving the water quality of the pond have yet to be determined, but local volunteers could potentially do simple steps like plant harvesting in the fall. Bob solicited help from the local communities to assist with long term maintenance of the dam and efforts to improve the water quality of the pond once a plan of action is formulated.

Bob indicated that if the necessary permits were obtained, then construction could begin in 2013. Bob then opened the floor for public questions and comments.

Public Questions and Comments:

Question: Will the new bridge allow for utilities to be placed under it to enable a sewer line to cross below the Turnpike?

Response: Possibly a sleeve could be installed where the existing bridge will be abandoned in place, however approval for a utility in the Limited Access ROW would need to be obtained from the Division of Turnpikes.

Question: Would it be possible for Fish and Game to manage the new dam?

- Response: This will be pursued through the permitting process.
- Comment: Councilor Hollingworth thanked the Department for listening to the people and researching the issues involved with the project.
- Question: If the two communities take over responsibility for the dam, how would we access it?
- Response: We will need to look at access points to the new dam as part of the project
- Question: Is the water quality of the pond improving as a result of a reduction of agricultural farming in the watershed?
- Response: Probably not.
- Comment: A citizen mentioned his concerns with wells and fire protection during construction of the project.
- Question: Will the water level of the pond after the new dam is built be lower than the historic pond elevation?
- Response: No, the intent is to set the new dam level at the historic dam level elevation of 8.55 feet, however modulating the level of the dam during the seasons may be important for improving the water quality.
- Question: Will dredging of the pond be required for Alternative B (Replace Dam)?
- Response: Some dredging will be required as part of the construction process of installing the new dam and removing the old dam, however the extent of the sediment needed to be removed will need to be studied as the project moves forward.
- Question: Will the dam have mechanical equipment to control water levels?
- Response: We are not sure yet what type of water level controls will be on the dam.
- Question: Mark Gearreald (Hampton Town Attorney) – The volume of sediment outflow could be increased with Alternative B – will that be studied? The sediment mobilization area will likely be more than the area around the construction site.
- Response: Areas where higher water velocities occur could mobilize sediment. As the project moves forward this issue will be studied as part of a sediment management plan.
- Question: Will upstream sediment mobilize to the area dredged by new dam construction?
- Response: This issue will also be studied as part of the sediment management plan.
- Question: If a permit cannot be obtained for Alternative B, then will Alternative C be pursued?
- Response: Not sure, the Department needs to work through the permit process.

- Question: How do we do plant harvesting?
Response: We will need to develop a water quality management plan for the Taylor River Pond to guide potential volunteers working on the pond's water quality.
- Question: What would the town's burden be if they were to take over responsibility for the dam?
Response: We are not that far in the process yet.
- Comment: The level of the dam may have fluctuated due to recent boards breaking. I have noticed the Turnpike crews repairing broken boards.
- Comment: Fred Welch (Hampton Town Administrator) – The town of Hampton will be very involved with the design and construction of the dam. We would like to see the new dam have a rapid lowering ability for storm surge management. We also have concerns about potential sediment release and impacts to the down stream estuary. We will want to see monitoring of the down stream estuary. We expect the Department to still fix the existing dam if they cannot obtain a permit for a new dam. We are concerned about a dam failure and sediment transport during a dam failure event.

Submitted by:

C.R. Willeke, P.E.
Preliminary Design Engineer

cc: W. Cass
R. Landry
C. Waszczuk
C. Green
M. Richardson
C. Hood
M. Dugas
Tony Puntin - Louis Berger Group, Inc.
Deborah Loiselle – Environmental Services
Cheri Patterson – Fish & Game
13408-B Project File